

K-461

1870's-1880's

Wharf Agent's House at Quaker Neck Landing

Chestertown

Possibly built by the steamship company which conducted a thriving shipping business at Quaker Neck Landing during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the house is said to have served as a captains house, and a tavern or inn. Built as a rather small late 19th century central gable, central hall house with rear ell, this small house was extensively remodeled in 1900. Slightly larger than the other modest houses of Quaker Neck Landing, the Wharf Agent's House is the most prominent visually because of its location on a bluff overlooking the Chester River.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. K-461

Magi No. 1504615604

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Wharf Agent's House at Quaker Neck Landing

2. Location

street & number East side Quaker Neck Landing Rd., On bluff at Chester River
R.D. 3, Quaker Neck Landing Road not for publication

city, town Chestertown ☒ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name James R. & Shirley J. Guard

street & number RD #3 telephone no.:

city, town Chestertown state and zip code Maryland 21620

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Court House liber EHP 124

street & number folio 260

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-461

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Built as a rather small late 19th-century central-gable, central-hall house with rear ell, this frame house was extensively remodeled about 1900. The main, central entry was removed and a window put in its place, the central hall and stair removed to make 1 large main-section first-floor room, and 2nd-floor, side bay, projecting double windows added to become a prominent visual feature.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Possibly built by the steamship company which conducted a thriving shipping business at Quaker Neck Landing during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the house is said to have served as a captain's house and tavern or inn. Only slightly larger than the other modest houses of Quaker Neck Landing, many also in the central-gable style so popular in Kent County in the late 19th century, this house is the most prominent of them visually because of its location on a bluff overlooking the Chester River, the numerous small buildings formerly accessory to the steamship business, and the modern county public landing.

Most likely the house was built for the wharf agent.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

7.1 DESCRIPTION (continued)

Building Form and Material

1. Size - Main Section: 2½ stories, 3 bays wide, 2 bays deep(narrow)
 Wing A: lower 2 stories, 1-2 bays deep
 Wing B: lower 2 stories, 2-3 bays deep
 Main section is only 14 feet deep.
2. Plan type - Built as central hall, but about 1900 approach side main entry was removed and a window put in its place; the stair was relocated to run along rear wall of main section (section added for stair).
3. Roof type - Main section: Steep gable, with alteration of rear slope to cover rear addition for stair
 Wing: gable
4. Chimneys - Location: 1) center east gable end of Wing A (for stove) 2) outside wall, center north gable end of main section (mid 20th century); the original chimney at this gable end was within the wall.
 Materials: brick
 Decorative elements: 1) 2 course band 2) same
5. Material/Walls - Main Section: Frame - wood shingles to eave line, then about 6" exposure weatherboarding; probably was all weatherboard originally; double half-round at intersection.
 Wing: Frame - wood shingles over weatherboards.
 Wing: Frame - wood shingles over weatherboards.
6. Material/Roofs - Main Section: wood shingles
 Wing A: wood shingles
 Wing B: wood shingles
7. Material/Foundation - Main Section: Originally on piers but filled in and part dug out for cellar - parged brick; partial cellar.
 WingA: Parged brick (cellar)
 Wing B: Parged brick (crawl space)
8. Age - Main section: 1870's -1880's
 Wing A: Same
 Wing B: Perhaps later, about 1900
9. Style - Vernacular central gable Victorian, originally but considerably altered in early 1900's.

Building Elements and Details

1. Doors - Main Entry: Location/description: Two entry doors from screened porch in L at rear of southern half of main section and depth of Wing B. To living room is an 6-panel door - 2 small panels at top, 2 vertical next, then 2 horizontal panels below. New in early 1900's.

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.2 DESCRIPTION (continued)

Secondary Entries: Location/Description: 1) East gable end, Wing B; frame reduced for present door (4 raised panels); small wall-hung shed roof canopy. 2) North side - Wing A/B (wing lines not apparent on north side since a "bump-out", especially on the 2nd floor alters the wing configuration).

2. Windows - Main Section: type - double-hung
lights - 6/6 (some are replacements); 8/2 large (1st floor - date from about 1900)
details - plain board frame with quarter-round backband to shingles; plain wood sills flush with shingles. Aluminum storm windows. Replacement double front windows protrude 8-10", each side bay, 2nd story.

shutters - none; there are hinge mortises in SE gable end frames.

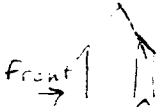
Wings: type - double-hung; double awning, 2nd floor Wing B - mid 20th century

lights - 6/6; one 3/3 casement Wing B

details - same as main section

shutters - Wing A, removed

3. Dormers - Main section - front roof slope only. There may have been rear slope dormers removed when rear wall moved out and secondary roof slope added. One each side of central gable - double-hung sash, 6/6 lights, with upper segmentally arched; weatherboard cheeks; gable roofs with 6-8" overhang end and sides. Pilasters plain but with flare near base. Composite crown moldings. Soffit return of overhang following rafter lower edges. *

4. Roof details - Main Section: Overhang all sides - about 10-12". No box cornice, just soffit on lower rafter edges; cyma crown molding; double bevel - bed molding. No eaves returns on gable ends. 6-8" fascia under eaves. 

Wings: Plain box cornice on north side "bump-out"; soffit on rafter bottoms throughout; cyma and cove (small) crown molding; small bed molding; Wing A - gable end has plain cyma. 6-8" fascia under eaves.

5. Porches: Rear (to southeast) of main section, over crawl space & wood floor framing; screened; houses main entry; standing-seam shed roof. Roof trim matches that of stair bump-out - probably also dates to 1904.

6. Color - Current: Grey painted or stained, shingles with white trim
Historic: Red? House once nicknamed "Scarlet Manor"

* Central gable: narrow; face of weatherboard; central round-headed window, probably originally double-hung but now with only upper sash of 6 lights. Wood louvers have replaced lower sash.

Front
→
section
added
for
enclosed
stair

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.3 DESCRIPTION (continued)

7. Other: 1) The cellar of Wing A has some glazed headers in the foundation, however, the bricks measure 8" x 2 1/8" x 3-3/4" or 4", and the brickwork at join with the main section appears continuous. Floor joists of Wing A run in the same direction as those of the main section; that is, they are parallel to Wing A's roof ridge. Sills are hewn; joists are circular sawn. Thus there is no evidence that this section is earlier.

2) Both 1st and 2nd floor ceilings are unusually low for a Kent County central gable house of this period.

Interior Description

1. Plan type - Built as central hall with rear ell; now main section is one large room.
2. Main Stair - Enclosed in rear added section of main section; straight run; work done about 1904; plastered enclosure walls. Other Stairs - none at present.
3. Major mantles - (Fairly recent) Living Room - north end. Rectangular opening, with narrow plain pilasters with simple capitals and bases; straight shelf with composite molded edge. Plain Frieze. One large molded panel over mantel; each side-cabinet below, shelves above.
4. Major Trim - Windows/Doors: Throughout main section and Wing A - 5 1/2" wide including stop (essentially - 3 fillet design) added 1904; deep composite aprons. *baseboards*
Baseboards: 5 1/2" board surmounted by cyma recta
Cornices: none. Chair Rails: none.
5. Major Doors - Most doors have wooden knobs; 2nd floor - 4 panel doors (raised panels)
6. Floors - First floor of Wing A and main section - strip maple (circa 1900); 2nd floor - narrow to medium random pine
7. Walls/Ceilings finished - painted plaster and sheet rock

Outbuildings/Site Description

1. Major outbuildings - late 19th - early 20th century
Stable - gable roof, with loft. Material - bay framing; vertical board and batten weatherboarding.
2. Site Description - Set back about 35 feet from the northeastern section of Quaker Neck Landing Road (the road is split here), the house is surrounded by tree and shrub plantings. A broad, flat lawn runs from the house to the southeast, ending at the river escarpment. A driveway runs along the northwest side of the house.

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.4 DESCRIPTION (continued)

3. Views to/from site - To the north and west are neighboring houses of the Quaker Neck Landing community. To the south the long public-landing dock can be seen. Also visible are the small buildings mentioned below under "History". Beyond them the Chester River and the opposite Queen Anne's County shore are visible. Trees to the northeast prevent views of the shore-front houses beyond the trees.

Use of Building

1. Current - Residence

2. Historic - Residence; Wharf Agent's House; tavern/inn (the latter two are not verified).

History of Building/Past Ownership

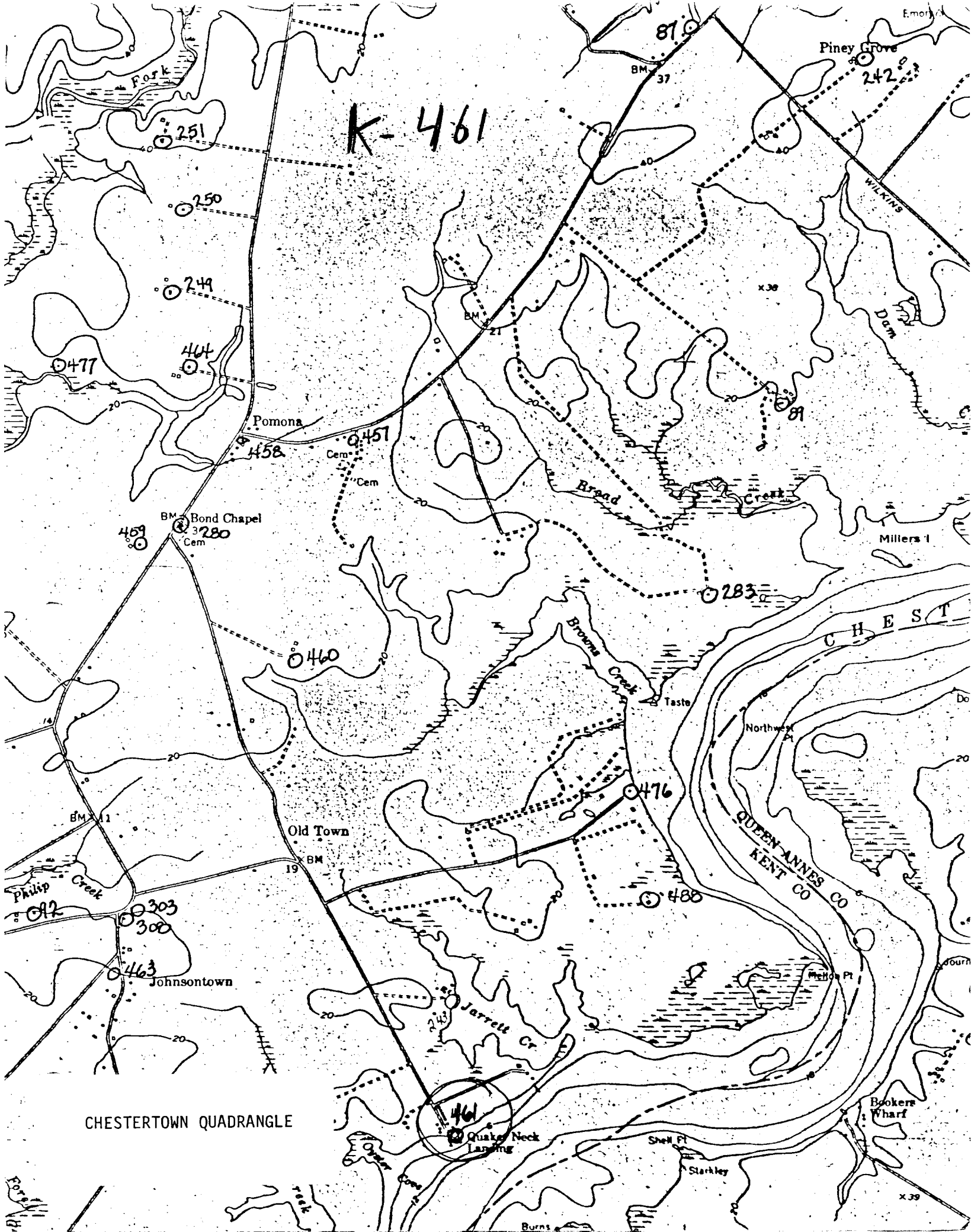
In the late 17th and early 18th century a road was said to have run in the general vicinity of the modern Quaker Neck Landing Road, terminating at the Old Town Ferry, which ran to the opposite side of the Chester River. One conjectural location for the late 17th, early 18th century settlement of Old Town is about 1/5 mile to the southwest of the present-day Quaker Neck Landing. The ferry persisted through much of the 18th century; the settlement did not. There is no evidence today of early buildings along the modern Quaker Neck Landing Road. All appear to be post-Civil War, built when Quaker Neck Landing became an important stop for Chester River steamships. In a sense, the community at Quaker Neck Landing (now with about 12-15 houses, some abandoned and dilapidated, seems to have been a "company town". In the late 19th century the steamship company operating at this wharf seems to have been the Chester River Company, which also made stops and owned property at Chestertown and at other points on the river. In the early 20th century (before 1916, at least) this company was bought out by the Pennsylvania Railroad, which operated its subsidiary as the Maryland, Delaware and Virginia Steamboat Company. With increasing competition of the automobile for travel and trucks for transporting produce from rural areas, the steamship line ended operations at the Quaker Neck Landing Wharf in the 1920's or 1930's.

No longer part of the Agent's house property (since the 1970's), several buildings from the steamboat era remain to the northeast of the public landing dock. Located at the bottom of the bluff on which the Agent's house stands and out on the promontory (which looks at least partially man-made), they have been substantially altered and added to and are now cottages. At the end of the promontory, resting partially on pilings, the largest cottage is said to have been a warehouse, with a small ticket office discernible at the side. Between the promontory and the modern pier, on pilings, is a former small gable-roofed oyster shucking house. A third cottage may have been used for an agent's residence. The use of the 4th is not known.

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.5 DESCRIPTION (continued)

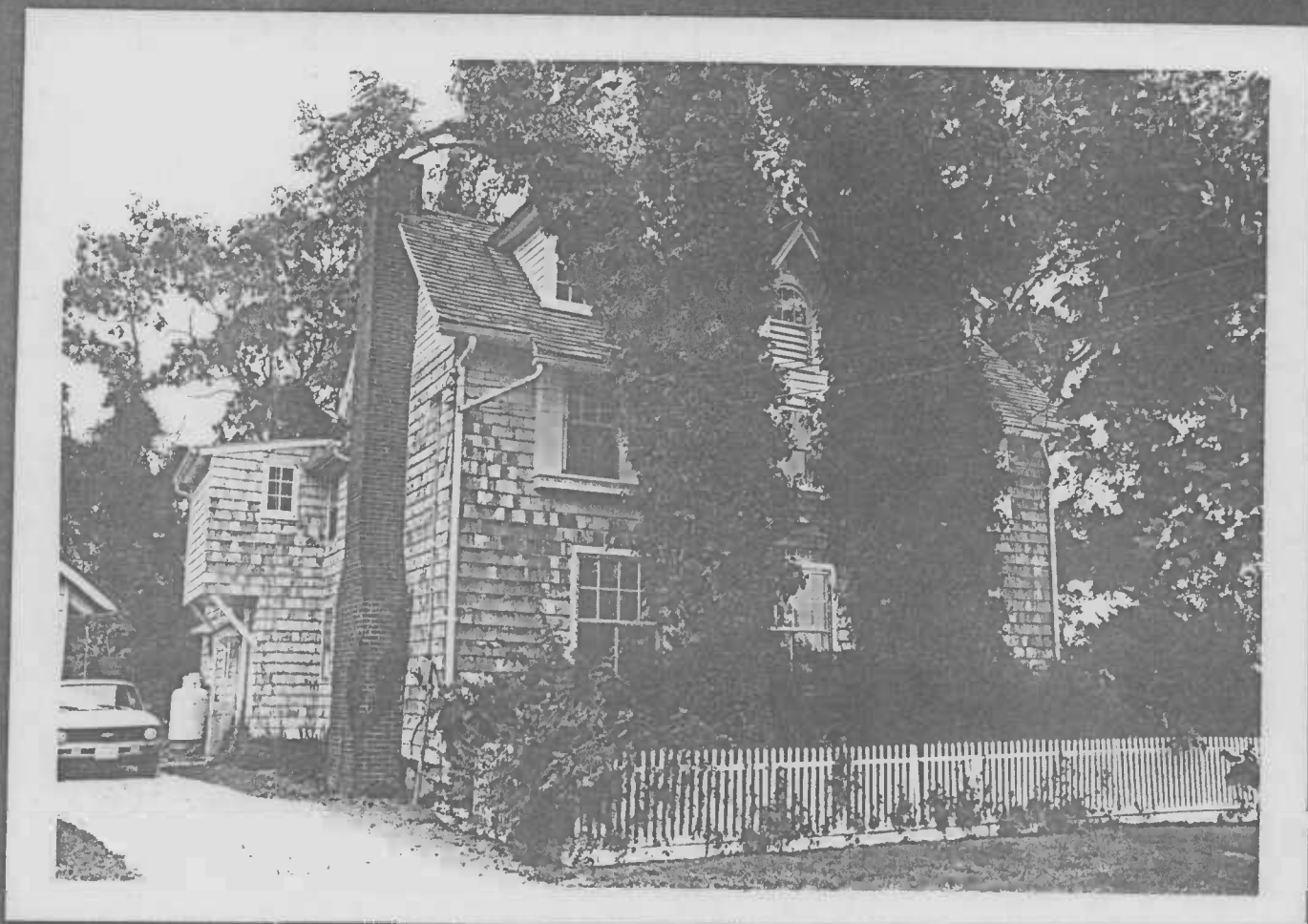
Off the end of the promontory several of the steamship wharf pilings remain, with deep water beneath. The fact that the river channel runs close to the Kent County side of the river here is one reason for the attractiveness of the site for steamboat use.



K-461

461
Quaker Neck
Landing

CHESTERTOWN QUADRANGLE



View to East

CAPTAIN'S HOUSE (K-461)

Quaker Neck, Chestertown, Kent County

Photograph: M. Q. Fallaw, June 1981



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Wharf Agent's House at Quaker Neck Landing

Quaker Neck Landing Rd., nr. Chestertown

M. Q. Fallaw

8/31/86

View to east

K 461 -20



K-461

Wharf Agent's House at Quaker Neck Landing

Quaker Neck Landing Rd., nr. Chestertown

M. Q. Fallaw

8/31/86

View to northwest

K 461-22